

Public Comment to the National Organic Standards Board Meeting  
The Ramada Conference Center  
1450 South Atherton Street  
State College, PA  
Thursday, April 20, 2006

- Good Day.
- My name is Cayce Warf (email: [cayce.warf@ecolabcom](mailto:cayce.warf@ecolabcom)).
- I work with Ecolab.
- I have special interest in dairy cow health and welfare through teat dips and hairy hoof wart treatments and food safety assurance during processing through the use of food contact antimicrobials and efficacious application of cleaning and sanitation formulations.
- I appreciate the work of the NOP staff. Also, I appreciate the members of the NOSB for the many, many hours they volunteer.
- However, I have both concerns and suggestions I would like to share with both the NOP and the NOSB. Some of undertakings of both are similar in some aspects with the reproduction process of elephants. After the initial courtship rituals, it takes around two years to get a 'product'. It seemingly takes forever to get petitions for new inclusions on the list on the agenda for board discussion. If the petition is referred to TAP review, well...more time. After the Board comes with a favorable opinion and refers/defers the matter to the NOP...more time! A specific example: Where is the Federal Register publication for peroxyacetic acid?
- A second concern I have involves the inconsistency in 'opinions' coming from different certifiers regarding the acceptance or non-acceptance of a particular substance in a particular application. We see certain certifying bodies involving themselves in 'interpretations' which gets very close to 'rule making', in my opinion. Let me give a couple of examples.
- Yesterday, the NOSB heard of a circumstance involving the use of a wool sealant (cheese wax) involved in the growth of shiitake mushrooms on hardwood logs. Historically, several certifiers looked at the use as an incidental component and had no concerns. Recently, another certifier 'judged' the use of this synthetic as an 'input' in the process and declined to certify the process as organic.
- Another example involves the use of a food-safe antimicrobial (not on the NOP list) to reduce Salmonella, E. coli, Campy, etc. on poultry carcasses. The certifier in the initial plant took the judgement of the USDA NOP that the material was a Food Contact Substance and, therefore, was outside the purview of the NOSB. The processor received certification. Years later, another processor, using a different certifier body, was denied certification because this certifier/certifying body disagreed with the USDA opinion that the antimicrobial compound was a Food Contact Substance and because it was not on NOP list, could not be used.
- What should a producer do? OBVIOUSLY, one shop around for one's certifier!! The last sentence was offered facetiously—a tongue-in-cheek comment. Certifiers should not have this judicial and/or legislative leeway/power!!

- I call on the NOP to quickly address the issue of Food Contact Substances. One acceptable outcome would be a ruling that Food Contact Substances are not under the oversight/jurisdiction of the NOSB. Alternatively, I propose that the NOP create a new Organic Program category called Food Safety Antimicrobials which would automatically include all substances already codified in 21 CFR 173 (Secondary Direct Food Additives) for pathogen reduction on the surfaces of foodstuffs and legislate their automatic inclusion, by reference, on the NOP list.
- In conclusion, the NOP is a marketing program. It should not ‘trump’ food safety in any aspect. Organic consumers expect and deserve that organically labelled meat and poultry, fish, and fruits and vegetables are at least as safe as non-organically processed foods.
- Thank you.